

American people support it. When the President says we should make sure that teachers and policemen and firefighters do not lose their jobs in this tough economy, overwhelmingly the American people support it. When the President says millionaires should pay a little bit more in their taxes to make sure the American recovery is underway, overwhelmingly the American people support that, too.

In fact, 56 percent of Republicans, when asked, say that is a reasonable way to pay for a jobs program. Unfortunately, none of those 56 percent serve with the Republicans in the Senate who happen to believe their No. 1 task and goal is to protect the incomes of the wealthiest people in America.

We can do better. We need to make sure we move forward on a bipartisan basis to create jobs. This President inherited a very weak economy. Under President Bush we had more than doubled the national debt. When President Bush took office, our national debt was \$5 trillion. When he left office, it was over \$10 trillion, two wars he didn't pay for, programs he didn't pay for, and tax cuts for wealthy people in the midst of a war—something no President had ever done. President Obama inherited that, and it has been a tough road, he will tell you, to get this economy back on track. Now he has a plan and the Republicans offer nothing. They vote against the President—whatever he wants they are opposing—and they vote against common sense, which says helping working families, helping small businesses, helping our veterans find jobs, and paying for it so it doesn't add to our deficit is a sensible approach to getting America back on the right track.

I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, put the campaigning aside for a moment. Take a look at what it takes to create jobs and bring your best ideas to the table. Let's sit down and put together a bipartisan bill. We will have the President's proposals as a starting point. Bring your ideas too. Let's do something for this country on a bipartisan basis. I think that is why we were elected.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BEGICH). The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, as always I listened with interest to my friend and colleague from Illinois. I did not come to the floor with my colleagues to discuss that particular issue, but it is interesting, the justification for the bailout of General Motors and Chrysler, when the fact is there are thousands of small businesses and companies all over America that had to go into bankruptcy but did not get the bailout that was favorable to the trade unions. Why couldn't General Motors have gone into bankruptcy the way every other company and corporation has had to do in these hard economic times, restructured, and then gone back into business again?

Instead, this administration and my friend from Illinois seemed to favor the

trade unions who obviously got very favorable treatment rather than the normal bankruptcy procedures. Unlike the treatment the favored trade unions and automobile corporations were able to get, thousands of small businesses and companies all over America were unable to get the benefit of their largesse.

PRESIDENTIAL BUS TOUR

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I came to the floor this morning with my colleagues to discuss the National Defense Authorization bill. Before I do, I wish to mention there has been a lot of talk dominating certainly part of the talk radio and television about the bus tour the President is on. A lot of it is centered around the bus. I am not going to discuss that anymore except to say that in 2008 when I ran for President I didn't need a bus to be paid for and billed by the government and the taxpayers of the United States. I understand that now there has been another bus purchased for who ever the Republican nominees are. How do you justify that? The Republican nominee may not want a bus.

The fact is, after having said that, the most important point here is that the President is now, on the taxpayers' money, campaigning for 3 days in North Carolina. It says in today's Washington Post "On N.C. Bus Tour, Obama In Full Campaign Mode." I say I have seen other Presidents, both Republican and Democrat, who have hedged and come right up to the edge, and sometimes crossed over it, charging the taxpayers for what has been clearly campaign activities. But never do I believe any of us have seen the kind of activity the President is engaged in, and all of it being charged to the taxpayers of America. That is wrong. That is the wrong thing to do.

According to recent reports, the President's campaign has raised record amounts of money already. The campaign should be paying for this North Carolina trip of his. I do not begrudge him beating up on us and criticizing us and making all kinds of allegations about not understanding his stimulus 2 package, which we understand very well is more of the same. But at least his campaign should be paying for this kind of campaigning.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with my colleagues from Georgia, Senator CHAMBLISS; from New Hampshire, Senator AYOTTE; and the distinguished Republican leader, Senator MCCONNELL, for purposes of a colloquy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, today we come to the floor to talk about the importance of the Defense authorization bill. For 50 years the Congress of the United States has enacted a Defense authorization bill, enacted it into law

and had it signed by the President of the United States. There have been times when this legislation has been very contentious—days during the Vietnam war, days during Operation Desert Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Bosnia, Kosovo. All of those times the Defense authorization bill has been a vehicle for debate and votes on the floor of the Senate concerning transcendent issues of national security.

For 50 years we have cared for the men and women who have served and provided them with the equipment, the pay, the benefits those men and women of this country deserve after hundreds of hours of deliberation, thousands of hours of written testimony and testimony before the committee—the full committee and subcommittees such as that under the chairmanship of the Senator from the State of Georgia.

Because of a part of the legislation, the majority leader has decided that we will not take this bill to the floor of the Senate. That is a betrayal of the men and women who are serving this Nation.

I understand there are differences on the issue of detainee treatment. I understand it is an emotional issue. But should it be a reason for the Senate not to carry out its 50-year tradition to debate and discuss and amend and vote and then come out with a package that provides for the needs, the training, the equipment, the benefits of the men and women who are serving?

I quote from a letter from the distinguished majority leader to Senator LEVIN and to me, "However, as you know, I do not intend to bring this bill to the floor until concerns regarding the bill's detainee provisions are resolved."

Is that the way the Senate works, that we do not bring bills to the floor unless objectionable matters that are disagreed with by one side or the other are not resolved? I always believed the way these issues are resolved is through debates, through amendment, through votes, through allowing the American people also to see and hear our deliberations, our discussions, and our debate.

Obviously the fiscal year has expired so this bill is obviously long overdue. Now we are in a position where apparently the majority leader wants to take up the President's jobs bill in parts, one by one, in complete disregard of the needs and requirements of the men and women who are serving our national security.

Part of that bill also is the portion from the Intelligence Committee. By the way, I note the presence of the Senator from South Carolina, who knows more about detainees than any Member of this body without question. He continuously travels to Iraq and Afghanistan, he has visited the prisons. He understands the issues better than anyone. I would be willing to ask him how he feels about the detainee provisions, after the Senator from Georgia makes